

UNCOVER DIVERSE COLOMBIA



SAFARI EXPERTS  
LUXURY - RESERVE - PHOTOGRAPHY - JOURNALS



COLOMBIA  
PHOTO EXPEDITIONS



OCTOBER 29 - NOVEMBER 9 2022

12

DAYS



Cartagena - Cocora Valley - Salento -  
Filandia - Cali -  
San Cipriano - Araucana Lodge -  
Bogota



San Cipriano River  
Christopher Calonje

## WHY COLOMBIA

Colombia has been undergoing a very positive transformation in the past decade, and with the recent signing of a historic peace treaty the country is now regarded as one of the safest countries for tourists in Latin America. For many years Colombia has remained a mystery for travelers and photographers from around the globe, but Colombians are now welcoming visitors from around the planet with open arms.

Colombia is one of the most biodiverse countries on the planet. It is also the birdiest country on earth, with more than 1,950 species (almost 20% of the world's total). Colombia is equally diverse in terms of culture. It is a country with many distinct, varied regions, each with its own unique customs, dances, traditions, accents, social patterns, and cultural adaptations. An added benefit is the food! Along with other cultural expressions of national identity, Colombian cuisine varies among its many different regions, and is as diverse as its climate, landscapes, and people.

A country as diverse and friendly as Colombia undoubtedly offers a plethora of photographic opportunities and subjects, and an invitation to get immersed in the natural landscapes and vibrant culture the country has to offer.

## ABOUT THIS TOUR

This tour is designed to highlight Colombia's astounding cultural and natural diversity, and we believe we have struck the perfect balance with this exhilarating itinerary: From the rich history of colonial Cartagena and Gabriel Garcia's Magical Realism, to hiking among the towering wax palms of the Cocora Valley, to enjoying everyday life in quaint coffee-growing villages, to being seduced by the Latin rhythms of the salsa capital of the world, to riding motorcycle-powered carts through luscious rain forests, with three nights in the exquisite Araucana Lodge, and ending in the historic center of Bogota.

This trip is of epic proportions, complete with adventure, city life, seductive scenery, surreal ecosystems, diverse wildlife, and incredible hospitality. Join us in a land where everyday life is very real but visitors can easily escape into a magical world as they explore the culture and natural richness the country has to offer.

### NUMBER OF DAYS

12 days total including estimated travel time. 11 Nights

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Lodging will consist of a mix of 4 and 5 star hotels and lodges. The splendid Santa Clara, located in the heart of the walled city in Cartagena; Casa Duvelo which is a bicycle inspired hotel with a Scandinavian design; Hotel Movich which is a boutique hotel in the city of Cali and the recently constructed Araucana Lodge which offers gourmet farm to table meals from their organic garden. At Bogota you stay at a converted opera house in the city center.

## DAY 1

### Magical Realism in Cartagena

Few cities on Earth are as beautiful as Cartagena. On the sunny Caribbean coast of Colombia, Cartagena de Indias has rightfully earned a designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

And it is easy to see why. Founded in 1533, Cartagena still retains its colonial charm, with colorful balconies overlooking cobblestone streets and quaint plazas that pull you into impressive churches. The city was one of the main ports in the Americas during the Spanish Conquest, resulting in numerous pirate attacks that eventually led to the fortification of the city with 13 KM of stone walls.

After disembarking, the morning will be devoted to photographing the walled city, where there is something to suit all tastes. After lunch the group will continue exploring the beautiful architecture and striking monuments while engaging with the warm and friendly people. The walking tour will end with a sunset from one of the walls that surrounds the city.

Lodging: Hotel Santa Clara

Araucana Lodge





## DAY 2

### Bazarro Market and Getsemani Neighborhood

The morning is devoted to the Bazarro market, a great opportunity to get out of the charming old city and into the depths of local life in Cartagena. A tour through the rowdy, frenetic, vibrant, and labyrinthine market is guaranteed to provide a taste of sensory overload, even to the most experienced travelers. The place is dirty but friendly, and most of the locals working the market are happy to show off the catch of the day, the recent butcher cuts, or the fresh and colorful fruits and vegetables that abound.

The visit to the market is followed by a nice lunch at one of the last remaining 100% authentic eateries in town. After lunch, some time to escape the heat at the hotel pool or unwind while it cools off enough to stroll around in Getsemani. Just outside the hotel, the very authentic neighborhood offers a glimpse into every day life in Cartagena: local food vendors, graffiti art, galleries, public plazas, and kids being kids along the narrow streets.

Lodging: Hotel Santa Clara



Filandia

Kike Calvo

### DAY3

Morning flight to Pereira and spend the day exploring the streets of Filandia

We will take the first flight in the morning to the city of Pereira, and then head to the traditional Colombian village of Filandia. Known as one of the most beautiful towns to visit in the heart of the Coffee Region, the town offers a very authentic experience to the curious traveler. The architecture, landscapes and the sociability of the locals makes Filandia an obligatory stop for visitors.

After lunch in Filandia we visit an observation tower for magnificent views of the surrounding landscape before heading to the hotel for check in. Dinner will be at Casa du Velo.

Lodging: Casa du Velo

### DAY4

Manizales City Tour and Hacienda Venecia

After a city tour of Manizales we will have lunch at Hacienda Venecia, a coffee farm with 100 years of tradition and extensive experience in the cultivation, production, marketing, roasting and exporting of Colombian coffee. Its vast coffee fields have a large canopy of native trees, springs and diverse flora and fauna. The farm provides a backdrop for a tour where visitors can experience every stage of the coffee production



process as it happens and enjoy an authentic glimpse of life on a coffee farm.

Lodging: Casa du Velo

## DAY 5

### Cocora Valley and Salento - Transfer to Cali

The rolling green hills of the Cocora Valley afford surreal scenery and ample opportunities for hiking through cloud forest and along the Quindio River watershed. The landscape is unique as it is dotted with Colombia's national tree, the wax palm, an endangered species that is the tallest palm tree in the world. The spectacular scenery of the palms over-topping the cloud forest and pastures below is the perfect setting for nature photography and a hike in the mountains.

After lunch, we spend some time exploring Salento on foot. The bustling center park is perfect for people watching. Those who wish can also do a little shopping to support the local artisans that work in town.

The afternoon is spent crossing the mighty Cauca Valley which separates the western and central Andes, affording views of the imposing mountains on either side of the valley. Our destination is the friendly city of Cali, the salsa dancing capital of the world.

Lodging: Hotel Movich Casa del Alferéz



Cloud Forests and Coffee





Salsa  
Kike Calvo

Cats of the River  
Kike Calvo



## DAY 6

### Cali City Tour and Salsa

Founded in 1536, Cali is known as the Sucursal del Cielo, which loosely translates to “the branch office of heaven.” A whole day in this warm and friendly city nestled at the base of the western Andes, will surely provide great photo opportunities. We first visit the historic center of town and many of the churches and colonial buildings along the Cali River. The boulevard along the river is only open to pedestrians and is quite enjoyable, with wide open spaces, large trees and locals enjoying the outdoors. The rest of the morning will be spent taking a cooking class near the Galeria Alameda, a bustling market where the harvests from nearby farmlands and the Pacific Ocean are displayed.

After lunch we will take some salsa lessons and be treated to a short salsa dancing show, before exploring the bohemian San Antonio neighborhood. After the sun sets and the breeze from the nearby Andes mountains begins to descend on the city, those who wish can enjoy a tour of the vibrant nightlife of Cali and its friendly people.

Lodging: Hotel Movich Casa del Alferéz

DAY 7

Birdwatching and Hiking in the Cloud Forests of the San Antonio Forest

On this day the group starts the morning with a visit to the San Antonio Forest, which is designated as an Important Bird Area. A hike through the well-preserved cloud forest to a panoramic viewing area is always a favorite, as we enjoy views of Cali, the Cauca Valley and the Farallones National Park. This area is of importance in Colombia's ornithological history. More than 100 years ago, Frank Chapman, of the American Museum of Natural History, spent some time researching the bird diversity of this forest.

The afternoon is spent at one of the many local birding hot spots, with impressive feeder set ups that attracts hundreds of hummingbirds and colorful tanagers. This place is incredible for practicing your bird photography skills! The only problem is having too many subjects to choose from! The array of colors is awe-inspiring, with tanagers lining up to have a chance at the bananas and hundreds of hummingbirds visiting more than twenty feeders throughout the property.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge



Blue-headed Sapphire  
Juan Jose Arango







## DAY 8

### Day at Araucana Lodge

We will spend the day exploring the lodge grounds, consisting of 30 acres (13 hectares) that have been in the family since our grandfather purchased the tract of cow pastures in 1955. His vision was to bring back the forest whilst keeping a portion of the property in production of food and ornamentals. Today, as a family, they aim to carry on his legacy, doing it in a sustainable and organic manner. After lunch we hike the trails that meander through the restored forest, passing through bamboo groves and the two creeks that border the property. We will also have a chance to check out the organic vegetable and herb garden to learn about tropical farming, including coffee and ornamental plant production.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge





Brujitas in San Cipriano  
Christopher Calonje

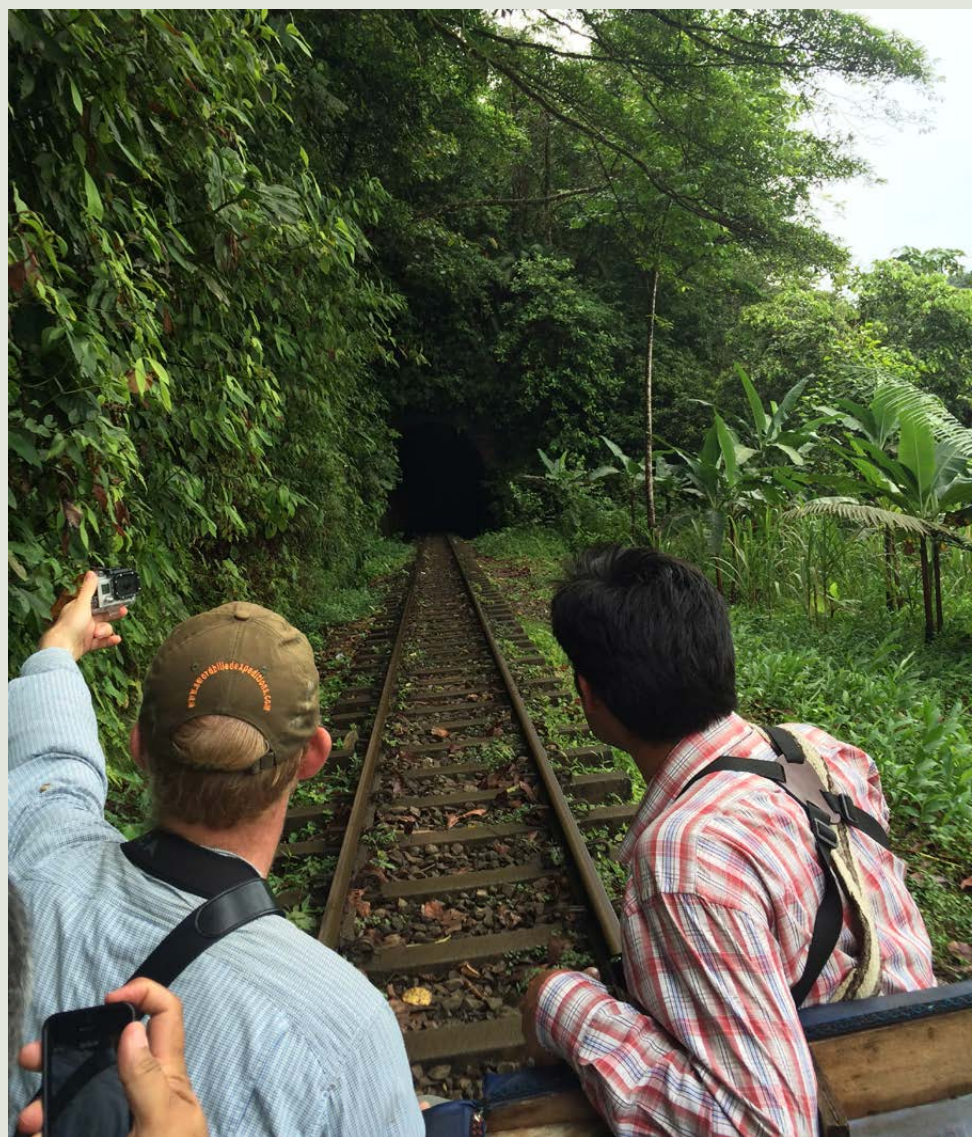
## DAY 9

### San Cipriano

After a 90-minute drive to Zaragosa and a pleasant 20 minute ride on “brujitas” (motorcycle-powered wooden carts on rails), one arrives in the town of San Cipriano. The ride is exhilarating and will surely get the adrenaline pumping as the “brujitas” travel through lush tropical rainforest, one of the most biologically diverse on the planet. The area is a protected reserve and is the source of drinking water for the nearby port city of Buenaventura. Located in the Choco Bioregion, it is known for being one of the wettest places on the planet.

Aside from the amazing diversity of birds and the very interesting local village, the reserve is home to one of the most pristine tropical rivers on the planet. A nice trail borders the river with various side trails that provide access to serene river scapes. A visit to the Waterfall of Love is also in order, with a chance to take a dip in the refreshing waters. Or you can take a ride along a nice stretch of river in inner tubes and enjoy this wild and scenic gem, whilst learning about the afro-Colombian cultures and history of the Pacific region of Colombia. After a long day we return to the lodge for dinner and rest.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge







Bogota  
Kike Calvo

## DAY10

### Cali - Bogota Flight (1 hour)

From the lodge we take a 90 minute drive to the Cali airport to catch a 1 hour flight to Bogota. A city where cosmopolitan meets colonial, Bogotá is Colombia's vibrant and bustling capital. Settled on a large savannah high atop the Andes mountains, the city is said to be 2,600 meters closer to the stars (a reference to its altitude), and offers infinite possibilities to the curious traveler. After settling into our historic hotel, the evening comes alive with dinner at Andres Carne de Res, a legendary steakhouse that offers up an impressive array of bright lights, theatrical service and colorful decorations.

Lodging: Hotel de la Opera

## DAY11

### Bogota

Our last day of the tour is spent exploring the historic Candelaria district. The cobble historic downtown presents a nice contrast, with preserved colonial buildings, 300-yearold museums, churches, convents and government buildings.

The group takes a ride on a funicular to the Monserrate Complex for lunch, an impressive mountain church that dominates the city center of Bogota and affords impressive views of this bustling metropolis. After, we visit the world famous Gold Museum, which hosts the largest pre-Hispanic gold collection on the planet. Together with pottery, stone, shell, wood and textile archaeological objects, the collection is a testament to life in what is now Colombia before European contact.

Lodging: Hotel de la Opera



San Antonio Forest

Kike Calvo

## DAY12

### Depart Bogota

Guests will be taken in private transport to the airport to catch flights home.

### TRIP INCLUDES

All Lodging (Double Occupancy)

All Meals From Lunch on Day 1 to Breakfast on Day 12

Potable Water Throughout the Trip

All Activities Listed in Itinerary

Internal Terrestrial Transport From Dock Pickup to Airport Drop-off

Limited Health and Accident Insurance

Internal Flights: Cartagena - Pereira and Cali - Bogota

### DOES NOT INCLUDE

Tips

Alcoholic Beverages

Airfare to Colombia

Covid Test if Necessary

Items of Personal Nature



Street Art in Getsemani

Christopher Calonje